

**U.S. Department of Education - EDCAPS  
G5-Technical Review Form (New)**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2023 12:03 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Constitutional Rights Foundation (S422B230019)

**Reader #1:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	20	19
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need	25	24
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	25	24
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	27
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	94
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement</b>		
1. Civic Engagement	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Student Access to Resources and Opportunities</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	7	7
<b>Sub Total</b>	7	7
<b>Total</b>	112	106

# Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - AHC-NA - 6: 84.422B

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Constitutional Rights Foundation (S422B230019)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
  - (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale. (10 points)
  - (ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (10 points)

#### Strengths:

The proposed plan describes in great detail how students will engage to reduce the civic learning gap. The student will have the opportunity to increase their US History knowledge while working with teachers using research-based curriculum. This approach to the problem will help students become better engaged with the content and teachers creating curriculum beneficial to the school and community.

- (i) The proposed plan has a clear description of how student will learn to engage in civic knowledge and develop skills (pg. e16). This will assist students to become more civic minded, and become better engage citizen in their community.
- (ii) The proposed plan has a clear indication of how teachers and students prioritize in closing the civic learning gap by utilizing multiple resources (pg. e18-e24) as described in the TDP curriculum development. The students will address topics in hate speech, climate change, and immigration.

#### Weaknesses:

- (i) The description of the curriculum needed more foundation in research (pg. e16-e17). This would give credence to the implementation of the program with more fidelity.

Reader's Score: 19

### Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
  - i. The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (8 points)
  - ii. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (7 points)
  - iii. The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs. (10 points)

**Strengths:**

The proposed plan specifies using various California data that shows the need for civic engagement. The plan will allow low-income students in California and New Mexico to have an opportunity for student centered civic learning. This proposed plan benefits student in Title I school and various other groups. The plan provides little evidence why focusing on these groups alone will benefit the community.

(i)The proposed plan unpacks the current up to date data to support the need of the project (pg. e38). This gives a clear indication of the need for civic action by students and how it can lead to student achievement

(ii) The proposed plan addresses the student-centered model (pg. e41) to give equitable teachers multiple opportunities to engage with the students.

(iii) The proposed plan will serve mainly Title I schools of low socio-economic and high population of Black and indigenous students (pg. e42), which will benefit them to access a wider curriculum to enhance student capacity to engage in democracy

**Weaknesses:**

(iii)The proposed plan gives little evidence of which characteristic of students will be selected proportionally to their background (pg. e42-e43). By using something like a rubric it will allow for a large population sample size.

**Reader's Score: 24**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

**1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

- i. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (13 points)**
- ii. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (12 points)**

**Strengths:**

The proposed plan justifies the project timeline with an in-depth budget. The program is being led by CRF which has historically been successful for a long period of time. CRF has experience in working with a variety of national partners. The grant management team is effectively described, and the yearly timeline is thorough. Few details are given to describe how the surveys will be used and monitored.

(i)The proposed plan is descriptive in the year-to-year prioritization of implementing the grant (pg. e46-e50). This allows for greater transparency in money management and lessen any conspicuous mishandling of the funds

(ii) The proposed plan provides ongoing support and communication with the grant members to collect information and surveys (pg. e51). This allows for greater collaboration between grant members to support efficiency throughout the term of the grant. And it will provide the appropriate feedback to quick changes to the implementation of the grant.

**Weaknesses:**

(ii)The proposed plan lacks in description of how the surveys will be implemented and protected. (pg. e53) A clearer description of the survey administration will allow for greater transparency of the collected data.

### Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:
  - i. The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization. (6 points)
  - ii. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)
  - iii. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. (8 points)
  - iv. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (8 points)

#### Strengths:

The proposed plan details the commitment of the staff to the project with staff having various role in the grant. The team will work out of the CRF offices and not major equipment will be necessary. The budget plans for various activities and conferences to support the team's needs. CRF will invest in the grant after the completion to support the student learning. The CRF team will collaborate with University of Southern California to create curriculum supportive of the student learning.

- (i)The proposed plan specifies the relations between grant personnel and university role (pg. e55). The plan is strengthened when greater collaboration is implemented.
- (ii) The proposed plan contains logical spending for personnel involved in the grant to sustain the funding (pg. e57,) which gives transparency into how funds are spent.
- (iii)The proposed plan describes a commitment by CRF leadership to support the grant (pg. e59). This will aide when the grant is completed.

#### Weaknesses:

- (iv)There is little description of partnership with other entities' role in the day- to-day management of the (pg. e59-e61) grant.

### Priority Questions

#### Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement

##### 1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to promote new and existing evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders, particularly such instruction, strategies, activities, and programs that benefit low income students and underserved populations. To meet this priority, a project must include one or both of the following-- a) Hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students; or b) Programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the

## **United States, including the Bill of Rights.**

### **Strengths:**

The proposed plan addresses both competitive preferences in meeting the civics in engagement in the TDP curriculum and the US history curriculum being implemented. The collaboration between teachers will create project planners and lessons to guide the students in making connection between civic duty and policy. The plan will be students centered to allow for more growth for the students.

The proposed plan creates an implementation pathway for students to work on a civic project to support their learning (pg. e33). This will assist students in learning the US history standards in a unique way.

The proposed plan describes in details how the principles of US history are connected to the project to support student community (pg. 33-e34), which will benefit the student and community engagement in civic action.

### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

## **Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Student Access to Resources and Opportunities**

### **1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 7 points)**

**Under this priority, and applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students—**

**a) in one or more of the following educational settings: (1) Early learning programs (2) Elementary school (3) Middle school (4) High school (5) Career and technical education programs (6) Out-of-schooltime settings (7) Alternative schools and programs (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities**

**b) That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or both of the following:**

**c) Rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e.g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices (up to 3 points).**

**d) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives) (up to 4 points).**

### **Strengths:**

The proposed plan supports the high school students' engagement with US history content, especially in areas of low economics in the two states. This plan is rigorous and inclusive of many students to be given an opportunity to engage in lessons about civic learning. The plan proposes a project that promotes collaboration and critical thinking to be applicable

in various facets of student life.

The proposed plan presents a unique way of collaboration by teachers with students of low socio-economic (pg. e35). This will support the learning by the students of US history but also engage their community with service.

The proposed plan focuses on projects to support the student's needs in social studies, (pg. e35). This will allow the students to get real life examples as they are learning the content.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 7

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**Status:** Submitted

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Status: Submitted

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Constitutional Rights Foundation (S422B230019)

**Reader #2:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	20	20
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need	25	25
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	25	25
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	27
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	97
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement</b>		
1. Civic Engagement	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Student Access to Resources and Opportunities</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	7	6
<b>Sub Total</b>	7	6
<b>Total</b>	112	108



# Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - AHC-NA - 6: 84.422B

Reader #2: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Constitutional Rights Foundation (S422B230019)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale. (10 points)

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (10 points)

#### Strengths:

The quality of the design of the proposed project is exceptional. The proposed project demonstrates a strong rationale through research-based practices and positive results from former projects. Additionally, the proposed project presents an excellent approach to the priorities established for the competition through partnerships to engage students and provide impactful professional development to teachers.

(i) The proposed project demonstrates a thorough rationale. The applicant aligns its strategies for The Democracy Project (TDP) with research-based practices (pages e26-29). For example, TDP's transformative social emotional learning is designed to impact all social emotional learning spheres that will deepen students' understanding of equity and social justice and is based on Jagers, Rivas-Drake, and Williams (2019) research (page e29). Additionally, the applicant further ties their strategies to one of their former projects where the focus was increasing teachers' confidence and expertise in making necessary instructional shifts for high-quality implementation of research-based practices in civic learning (pages e29-e30). The data collected by an external evaluator in this project showed that 100% of teacher gained access to high-quality, standards-aligned resources and 99% expanded their use of effective instructional strategies (page e29). The combination of research-based practices and the applicant's effective professional development approach prove a strong rationale for the proposed project.

(ii) The proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities established for the competition. This is evident through the unique partnership between the Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF), which is nationally recognized and brings content expertise to the project, and the University of Southern California Rossier School of Education (USC), which bring civic learning expertise and expertise in pedagogical approaches, to transform learning (pages e30-31). The utilization of content expertise with pedagogical expertise and a higher education institution that understands teacher development will lead to a more well-rounded approach that will be more impactful to students through student-driven civic learning. Additionally, the proposed project will engage students by connecting learning to their lived experiences, which will deepen their understanding and ultimately build their capacity to have their voices heard (page e32).

#### Weaknesses:

(i) No weaknesses noted.

(ii) No weaknesses noted.

### Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. **The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
  - i. **The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (8 points)**
  - ii. **The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (7 points)**
  - iii. **The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs. (10 points)**

#### **Strengths:**

The application demonstrates a need for the project in exceptional ways. It addresses the magnitude of the problem and the gaps in services to be addressed by the proposed project. Furthermore, the proposed project focuses on serving those with the greatest needs.

(i) The application presents convincing evidence for the magnitude of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. The applicant notes that in 2020 the state of California adopted a State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE) for California students to promote civic learning and engagement; however, in 2022, only 2% of high school diplomas received the seal (page e38). Additionally, a report from the Leveraging Equity & Access in democratic Education Initiative only 4% of Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) mentioned democracy and only 13% referenced the SSCE (page e38). Furthermore, the applicant notes that the lack of high-quality civic learning opportunities is magnified for underserved students, which is a large portion of the population to be served in California and New Mexico. Those states have 60% and 73% of students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals, and both states also have student populations that are majority Latinx (page e40).

(ii) The application thoroughly addresses gaps in service by connecting classroom learning to real-world action. The applicant recognizes the lack of student engagement in most civics' education, and specifically addresses the student-centered learning gap and the student empowerment gap (pages e41-42). The Democracy Project provides an active-learning model for teachers to promote civic literacy that is valuable to all teachers, including inexperienced teachers who often serve in Title I schools (page e41). Additionally, the proposed project builds foundational knowledge about key Constitutional principles and ideals of democracy that enhances students' abilities to be engaged participants of democracy (page e42). Through the real-world connections, students are able to apply that knowledge to civic actions related to issues of their interests (page e42). The applicant addresses the gaps and provides critical areas of implementation to overcome the gaps.

(iii) The services provided through the proposed project are focused on those target populations with the greatest need. The proposed project focuses on two states with high free and reduced-priced meal eligible students as well as a high Latinx student population (page e40). Additionally, the applicant will draw 90% of teachers participating in the in-person professional development from Title I schools, which often serve high populations of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) students (page e42). Additionally, the applicant will reach other underserved population by outreaching to alternative schools, continuation schools, and juvenile justice settings (page e42-43). Through these efforts, the applicant expects at least 75% of the 6,000+ students served will represent at least two underserved groups (page e43). The applicant has a comprehensive plan to focus its civic education efforts on serving those with the greatest need.

**Weaknesses:**

- (i) No weaknesses noted.
- (ii) No weaknesses noted.
- (iii) No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 25**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

**1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

- i. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (13 points)**
- ii. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (12 points)**

**Strengths:**

The application demonstrates an exceptional management plan for the proposed project. It describes a management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. It also details appropriate procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the project.

- (i) The application presents a comprehensive management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. The management plan outlines tasks required to complete each objective, the deliverables resulting from the tasks, responsible parties, and the quarter and year the tasks will occur (pages e49-52). For example, to complete the comprehensive evaluation objective, the CRF Grant Administrator and USC Co-Director will identify an external evaluator in quarter 1 of year 1 (page e51). The very detailed timeline for accomplishing the project tasks when all tasks are complete, which should result in the objectives being met and translate to a successful project.
- (ii) The proposed project presents thorough procedures to ensure feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. The applicant will utilize an external evaluator to formally assess the project (page e53). In addition to the external evaluator, the applicant has integrated aspects to facilitate ongoing feedback and continuous improvement (page e53). This will be accomplished through surveys for trainings, orientations, and ongoing support received through the project (page e53). The project team will analyze survey responses and make improvements (page e53). Additionally, the grant administrator and co-directors will meet monthly with continuous improvement always on the agenda (pages e53-54).

**Weaknesses:**

- (i) No weaknesses noted.
- (ii) No weaknesses noted.

### Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. **The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
  - i. **The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization. (6 points)**
  - ii. **The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)**
  - iii. **The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. (8 points)**
  - iv. **The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (8 points)**

#### **Strengths:**

The application demonstrates adequacy of resources for the proposed project in limited ways. It identifies reasonable costs in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project, and it demonstrates commitments of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. However, it is unclear whether the support from the lead applicant organization is adequate and whether the applicant has an adequate multiyear financial model to continue the project after the grant ends.

(i) The applicant supports the project with facilities to host meetings and trainings for the Democracy Project Leadership Cadre, which is the only facilities requirement for the project. This is because Tier 1 teacher trainings will take place at schools or LEA sites, which does not involve any costs (page e57). The applicant states that no equipment is needed for the project.

(ii) The proposed project's budget of \$1,819,857 contains costs that are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the project (page e58). For example, the applicant requests a reasonable \$16,418 in travel per year, which is reasonable for the meetings and training scheduled (page e125). The application provides an estimated, conservative per student cost of \$303 with a more likely cost of \$150 per student since the teachers participating in professional development will likely implement new strategies in more than one classroom (page e58). Breaking down the costs to a per student amount shows the value of the project's costs.

(iii) The applicant demonstrates that it has limited resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant period. The applicant's model includes scalability to a national level in the third year of the project, which will result in requiring less funding to operate the project (page e60). The proposed project has extensive support as evidenced with letters of support from partner organizations, school districts, and stakeholders, which demonstrates the commitment of partners and stakeholders (pages e59-60).

(iv) The application demonstrates the full relevance and commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. Each partner, Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF), University of Southern California Rossier School of Education (USC), and Civic Engagement Resource Group (CERG), brings unique expertise to the proposed project (pages e60-64). CRF brings civic education expertise in providing professional development to teachers and embed research-based practices into curriculum (page e61). USC brings a research and pedagogical focus to the project with specific involvement in multilingual education and innovative pedagogy through an educational equity lens (pages e61-62). CERG, which is led by a nationally known civic education researcher, will serve as an advisor to the proposed project and will assist, at a minimum, with the evaluation (page e63). The collaboration of these partners, each with their own unique expertise, will positively impact the professional development the teachers receive and ultimately the civic education students receive.

**Weaknesses:**

(i) The applicant fails to clearly identify any supplies or other resources that are provided from the lead applicant organization for the project (pages e55-58). The applicant notes supplies for Tier 1 teachers, technology, and personnel from the lead applicant organization; however, those items are budgeted in the requested budget and not provided as support (pages e57-58).

(ii) No weaknesses noted.

(iii) The applicant's financial model to continue the project after the grant ends is not solid. Although the project will not require the same degree of funding as during the grant period, the applicant does not rely on firm funds. The applicant is relying on external funding, which is not a firm commitment (page e60). The application could be strengthened by including information regarding the financial commitments of the applicant after the grant period ends (page e60).

(iv) No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 27**

**Priority Questions****Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement****1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement (up to 5 points)**

**Under this priority, we provide funding to promote new and existing evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders, particularly such instruction, strategies, activities, and programs that benefit low income students and underserved populations. To meet this priority, a project must include one or both of the following-- a) Hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students; or b) Programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.**

**Strengths:**

The application demonstrates exceptional evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers. It identified hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students and programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.

The proposed project utilizes evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers. The strategies applied in the proposed project are each evidence-based proven practices (pages e26-29). The hands-on civic engagement activities, such as Civil Conversations, are evidenced through a civic action project requiring student inquiry, critical thinking, and problem solving that is aligned with issues students care about (page e33). In the professional development component, teachers are provided with civic action lessons, materials, and ways to engage parents/guardians and families in their student's civic action projects (pages e33-34). Additionally, the proposed project will educate students about the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, and through an inquiry approach, apply those understandings to contemporary issues (pages e34-35).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 5

**Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Student Access to Resources and Opportunities****1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 7 points)**

**Under this priority, and applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students—**

**a) in one or more of the following educational settings: (1) Early learning programs (2) Elementary school (3) Middle school (4) High school (5) Career and technical education programs(6) Out-of-schooltime settings (7) Alternative schools and programs (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities**

**b) That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or both of the following:**

**c) Rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e.g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices (up to 3 points).**

**d) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives) (up to 4 points).**

**Strengths:**

The application demonstrates a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunities for underserved students in adequate ways. The proposed project is rigorous, engaging, and inclusive but lacks details regarding a well-rounded approach. Additionally, the proposed project improves the engagement of underserved students but does not clearly address underserved community members and opportunities for leadership.

The applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in middle and high schools, alternative schools, and juvenile justice settings with at least 90% of schools being Title I schools, alternative schools, and juvenile justice settings (page e35). Additionally, proposed project is rigorous, engaging, and inclusive because it is designed to be embedded in social studies curriculum, so all students are provided civic learning opportunities, not just those who participate in extra-curricular activities (page e35). The lessons include accessibility strategies to offer students equitable learning opportunities that can be adapted to student needs (page e35). The proposed project also builds students' 21st century skills, such as collaboration, active listening, critical thinking, and effective communication, to help prepare students for college and career (page e36). Through student engagement, underserved students are better prepared to take a seat at the table and make their voices heard as a result of due process and equal protection being woven throughout the curriculum, policy landscape analysis, and the foundational skills students learn (page e36).

**Weaknesses:**

The proposed project lacks clear evidence of a well-rounded approach, which may include incorporating the arts or music (pages e35-37). Additionally, the proposed project lacks evidence that it improves engagement for community members and provides opportunities for leadership, such as establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives (pages e35-37).

**Reader's Score:** 6

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/04/2023 12:10 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2023 12:06 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Constitutional Rights Foundation (S422B230019)

**Reader #3:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	20	20
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need	25	25
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	25	25
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	29
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	99
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement</b>		
1. Civic Engagement	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Student Access to Resources and Opportunities</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	7	7
<b>Sub Total</b>	7	7
<b>Total</b>	112	111



# Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - AHC-NA - 6: 84.422B

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Constitutional Rights Foundation (S422B230019)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
  - (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale. (10 points)
  - (ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (10 points)

#### Strengths:

The applicant presents an extremely well-designed project that will result in new learning pathways, including ones focused on U.S. history and media literacy. The proposed project directly aligns with the competition priorities.

#### Supporting Statements:

##### Strengths:

- i. The applicant clearly indicates that the proposed project demonstrates a rationale. The applicant provides a logic model that clearly articulates the inputs and resources and links them to relevant activities, outputs, outcome objectives, and overarching goals. For example, the applicant seeks to update six curriculum modules, develop four new and two revised Civil Conversations lessons, develop 4-6 lessons for the new U.S. History pathway, develop 4-7 lessons for the new Media Literacy pathway, and develop 12-16 new online PD assets, which will support the training of Tier 1-3 participants and result in students reporting increased civic skills and civic dispositions regarding knowledge of U.S. history, collaboration with peers, identifying bias and misinformation, and understanding the role of citizens in democracy. Lessons on U.S. history, academic discussions of popular political issues, such as gun violence and immigration, and lesson on media literacy will culminate in a civic action project for students. (e14-30, e68)
- ii. The applicant clearly demonstrates that the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority established for the competition. The applicant will collaborate with experts in civic learning and pedagogy from USC to provide high-level expertise to teachers. The applicant presents a multi-pronged approach so that teachers have the choice to select a pathway that most resonates with them and their students, and that will result in a civic action project. In-person and online professional development (PD) will be provided to teachers, and a Leadership Cadre will be formed to provide further support and secure additional buy-in from schools. (e30-33)

#### Weaknesses:

- i. No weaknesses noted.
- ii. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

## Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
  - i. The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (8 points)
  - ii. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (7 points)
  - iii. The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs. (10 points)

### Strengths:

Relevant data and research are provided that indicate a clear need for the proposed project activities. Title I schools and underserved student populations will be prioritized for access to relevant professional development for teachers, which will support students in civics education engagement.

### Supporting Statements:

#### Strengths:

- i. The applicant thoroughly describes the severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. There is a clear need for additional training on civic learning and education, as the state recently adopted the State Seal of Civic Engagement, and yet, only 2% of high school diplomas contained the SSCE. Fewer dedicated history/social science staff compared to other subject areas. Fewer civic engagement opportunities for low-income students and Black and Latinx students compared to White peers, low proficiency on the 8th grade civics assessment, and a large immigrant population showcase a clear need for the proposed interventions. (e38-40)
- ii. The applicant fully explains the specific gaps and weaknesses in services, infrastructure, and opportunities that will be addressed by the proposed project. The applicant expects to fill the student-centered learning gap by providing teachers with multiple pathways to choose from that will encourage students to engage in their learning. The applicant will focus on Title 1 schools, which they note are more likely to have teachers with less experience. (e40-42)
- iii. The applicant clearly documents how the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with the greatest needs. Project services will be provided in California and New Mexico, which include high numbers of underserved students, including BIPOC students. The prioritization of teachers from Title I schools (90% of schools) for participation in the project will further maintain the focus on underserved students. (e42-43)

### Weaknesses:

- i. No weaknesses noted.
- ii. No weaknesses noted.
- iii. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In

determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- i. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (13 points)
- ii. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (12 points)

**Strengths:**

The applicant details a comprehensive management plan that will allow the applicant to successfully carry out the project activities with a great likelihood of achieving the project goals and objectives.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

- i. The applicant provides a thorough management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. The Work Plan clearly identifies the tasks associated with each objective and links them to specific deliverables (milestones), responsible persons, and an appropriate quarterly-based timeline. The timeline covers the full grant period. Project staff and their allotted time commitments are clearly indicated. For example, CRF Vice President will serve the Grant Administrator and will contribute .20 FTE in Years 1-2 and .15 FTE in Year 3. (e44-52, e73-98)
- ii. The applicant details information to ensure feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. Specific feedback mechanisms include ongoing support and communication with DPLC members and semi-annual check-in meetings, surveying of DPLC members to assess training, surveying of Tier 1 in-person PD participants after training sessions, and surveying of Tier 2 online participants after orientation. Survey results will be analyzed and shared and examined on a monthly basis between CRF and USC leadership team, which will support decision-making and any necessary changes to project activities. (e53-54)

**Weaknesses:**

- i. No weaknesses noted.
- ii. No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 25**

**Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources**

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:
  - i. The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization. (6 points)
  - ii. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)
  - iii. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. (8 points)
  - iv. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project

**to the implementation and success of the project. (8 points)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents a clear plan for securing the necessary resources to successfully carry out the proposed project as described. Further discussion with partners regarding long-term commitment of specific resources has the potential to provide for increased sustainability after the grant ends.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

i. The applicant indicates excellent support, facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources to carry out the proposed project. CRF and USC will provide sufficient staff and percentages of effort to fulfill the project activities. CRF will maintain their Los Angeles office location and host the DPL Cadre meetings and trainings there. The budget includes necessary expenses for supplies, meals, travel, and lodging. An external evaluator will be hired upon award of the grant; requested funds for this position are included in the budget. (e55-58)

ii. The costs appear reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. By building TDP, the applicant expects to share the curricular resources online with other educators and free of cost. The applicant expects to provide PD and trainings to 240 teachers who are expected to reach up to 6,000 students in total, which equates to \$303 per student cost. Personnel, fringe benefits, travel, supplies, contractual, indirect costs, and training stipends are clearly documented in the budget. (e58-59, e123-137)

iii. The applicant demonstrates that it has the appropriate resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant. The applicant has included funds in the budget to cover the costs of travel for the USC team to present at state, national, and/or international conferences to share project results. Continued grant- and fund-seeking by the applicant and continued partnerships are expected to support the project components after the grant ends. (e59-60)

iv. The indicated partners fully demonstrate commitment to the implementation and success of the proposed project. Required letters of commitment are provided. Partners include the University of Southern California Rossier School of Education (USC) and Civic Engagement Resource Group (CERG). (e60-64, e101-119)

**Weaknesses:**

i. No weaknesses noted.

ii. No weaknesses noted.

iii. Further information on continued support and commitments from partners would strengthen the sustainability plan. A clear financial plan that includes a breakdown of how costs for the proposed project activities will be re-allocated and/or absorbed should be provided. (e59-64)

iv. No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 29**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement (up to 5 points)**

Under this priority, we provide funding to promote new and existing evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders, particularly such instruction, strategies, activities, and programs that benefit low income students and underserved populations. To meet this priority, a project must include one or both of the following-- a) Hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students; or b) Programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents a clear plan for producing innovative learning activities for educators and students to achieve increased civic engagement.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

a. The applicant clearly documents that the proposed project includes hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students. Students will engage in a civic action project regardless of the pathway that is selected and implemented by the teacher. Students will take the lead on their civic action project and will be guided by teachers to identify an issue, connect it to public policy, and address the issue through specific actions. Hands-on approaches include small-group discussion, engagement with a text, and peer-to-peer discussions. (e33-35)

b. The applicant clearly specifies that the proposed project provides programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights. The applicant will develop the U.S. history pathway to provide more lessons on the Constitution and Bill of Rights. (e33-35)

**Weaknesses:**

a. No weaknesses noted.

b. No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Student Access to Resources and Opportunities**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 7 points)**

Under this priority, and applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students—

a) in one or more of the following educational settings: (1) Early learning programs (2) Elementary school (3) Middle school (4) High school (5) Career and technical education programs (6) Out-of-schooltime settings (7) Alternative schools and programs (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities

b) That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or both of the following:

c) Rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e.g., that include music and the arts) approaches to

learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices (up to 3 points).

d) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives) (up to 4 points).

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents a thorough plan to promote equity in student access to educational resources and opportunities through their planned collaborations and PD with teachers employed at Title I schools.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

a. The applicant specifies that the proposed project will promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved middle school and high school students of which at least 90% will attend Title I schools and alternative schools in California and New Mexico. Thus, Title I schools include at least 40% of students who are from low-income families. (e35-37)

b. The proposed project is expected to examine the sources of inequity and inadequacy. (e35-37)

c. The proposed project documents rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices. The applicant indicates that the lesson guides contain accessibility strategies that can be adapted to an individual student's need. The documents also meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 and allows for differentiation. Additionally, student learning materials will be scaffolded and short explainer videos will be provided to accommodate students at different reading levels and to increase understanding of abstract concepts. Lastly, content for parents will be provided in English and Spanish. (e35-36, e147-148)

d. The proposed project will establish, expand, and improve the engagement of underserved community members in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, and/or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership. The civic education curriculum will include present day topics that are interdisciplinary in nature and that students are interested in and will provide students with the necessary skills to understand the policy process and potentially influence policy through civic education action projects. (e36-37)

**Weaknesses:**

a. No weaknesses noted.

b. No weaknesses noted.

c. No weaknesses noted.

d. No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 7

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**Status:** Submitted

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